

Wid

MEMORANDUM FOR RECORD:

37th Meeting with the Chinese in Paris.

Having been notified in Germany that the Chinese had a message and wished to deliver it to me, I returned by commercial air from Germany. (This message was given regarding my return to Paris by a prearranged code with my secretary.)

On Sunday, January 30th, 1972. I went to the Chinese Embassy residence in Neuilly and was received in accordance with the usual rites and priorities. The Ambassador said that he appreciated my retraining from Germany but he had a communication of some consequence for me. After minor preliminaries washed down with tea and preserved apples he ordered Tsao to give me the communication and said that in order to save time they would not read it to me. This was the first time that this was done and I am sure it was to avoid the embarrassment of having to read something relatively unpleasant. I read the communication which Tsao handed me and made a conscious effort to show no emotion or reaction, folded it carefully and said that I would transmit it at once. This was their rather harsh reply to our note concerning our Vietnam Peace Plan which I transmitted to General Haig at 2245 that same day. Once this was out of the way they were extremely cordial though there was clearly a note of some embarrassment in the manner of all three including the normally supremely poised and self confident Ambassador. They asked about my trip to Germany, whether I was going to China, What the weather was like in the United States at this time and other platitudes. I did not wish to prolong the situation so after another cup of jasmine tea and two more preserved apples, I took leave of them and was ushered out with more than usually heart handshakes and back pats.

They did seem genuinely relieved when after giving me the harsh note they were able to move to the more technical details of the forthcoming trip of the advance party.

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PA/HO, Department of State
E.O. 12958, as amended
Date: 6-30-2005